

The Republican.

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PROGRESS OF REVOLUTION.

Indications of insurrections are visible throughout the north of England and Scotland: several small assemblages of people with arms have taken place, some little skirmishing, and a few lives have been lost. Every where the military are obliged to sleep on their arms, and no where have they shewn themselves like Spanish soldiers. It appears very probable, that the ministers have been again setting their instigators to work, to urge the discontented into a premature and unsupported insurrection. They first rise at Huddersfield, and when appeased there, they are up at Paisley and Glasgow; as soon as the motion is quelled in Scotland, they are instigated again at Huddersfield and neighbouring towns. Where this is to end it is difficult to say, but it is not too much to say, that matters cannot long remain in this state. The agents of the government might be taught, that they are applying fire to combustible matter, which, when it begins to conflagrate, they will find more difficult to be extinguished than they at first calculated upon. We have here a strong practical proof, that the extensive circulation of political pamphlets, and a frequent assemblage in public meetings, is calculated to evaporate those feelings which have now burst forth with arms in their hands. We have had nothing of this kind, since Oliver instigated Brandreth and others to meet with arms. It should be recollected, that in Spain several unsuccessful attempts were made to commence the insurrection, and at last there came a successful one, but not until *Porlier*, *Lacy*, and several others had been put to death by the government, for attempting what is now considered praiseworthy. The names of *Porlier* and *Lacy* are now mentioned with veneration in Spain. Successful resistance in this or any other country will soon lose the title of rebellion. If James the Second could have driven the Dutchmen out of this country, his Jefferies would soon

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have found juries to convict all those of high treason, who had joined, what would have then been called, the invasion or rebellion. The first battle between British soldiers and British subjects in the present age, has taken place at Bonny-muir, in Scotland; but it is madness for undisciplined men, however brave, to attempt to take the open field, against trained and well disciplined soldiers, such as compose the standing army of this country. The inhabitants of a town will stand on equal ground with the military if they are attacked in their own houses, and would then be capable of acting on the defensive. It appears the military at Cadiz became in turn the victims of the inhabitants, after the latter had got to their houses; but whilst they were exposed to the fire, and the bayonets of the military in the open streets, they became an easy prey to them. An unnecessary shedding of blood is at all times to be deprecated, but circumstances will occur when it is found to be indispensable. We find that kings and their parasites think nothing of a few thousand lives to gratify a point of ambition, therefore we must not repine at a trifling loss in the all important cause of liberty. I have no idea that any thing short of down right intimidation can bring our opponents to just measures. It is a folly to talk of the weapons of reason, when they are met by those of a conscious and malignant ridicule. What does such a man as Castlereagh or Canning care about the weapons of reason, they will continue to smile securely, while the weapons of reason are hurled at them unsupported by some more powerful arguments. He that durst not forward a good cause, should be careful not to mar it: if he be alarmed at danger, let him retire in silence. Such men are pestiferous, as will urge by insinuations what they profess openly to reprobate. We have no small number of such writers in this country, particularly in the newspaper connection. I am firmly of opinion, that whilst reform has no other support than clamour, it will never be attained, and for my own part, I would rather be silent than advocate it on such grounds. Our opponents do not attempt to reason with us, they laugh at us, and shake the keys of the dungeon, and the halter in our faces, and point to their standing army as their last resource. Shall we then suffer ourselves to be disarmed, bound, and patiently wait our turns to fall victims to an oligarchical despotism? Forbid it nature. Perish the man who advocates such measures and recommends them as essential to the future interest and welfare of the people. What would reason have done with Ferdinand and the priests of Spain? What effect had the reasoning of our colonial brethren in the

United States? They reasoned, and they petitioned, and they were laughed at, and threatened with military execution. They prepared to meet the military execution. And what followed? Let the reasoner speak. Shew me a state of oppression and of despotism, that was ever overthrown by the weapons of reason alone, and I for one will be forward to acquiesce in your pacific reasoning. Our late king had sufficient good sense to tell bishop Watson, that the sharper a conflict was, the sooner it was over, and the less destructive it became. I am quite of his opinion, and therefore on the score of humanity, I am for pointed and urgent means. I am further of opinion, that a determined preparation for hostilities will prevent it finally, if ever any measure is calculated to do it. When the proper strength of the parties come into view, I am inclined to think that our enemies will be disposed to hold out the hand of fellowship to the advocates of liberty, and I know that the latter have sufficient good sense to accept it.

For the present, the ebullition of feeling is in some degree subsided, but I cannot imagine that the conduct of the master manufacturers in and about Glasgow, is calculated to appease, in refusing to employ any of those men who have left their work, unless they give up their leaders, advisers, or instigators, such a step might drive the men to desperation, and the feelings of 60,000 men might not be tampered with prudently. If we contemplate the occasion, and the uniform and simultaneous manner in which those men quitted their work, it appears certain that one confidential person was sufficient to lead them. They are unanimous in feeling, and consequently, none but the most timid, false, and hypocritical, will accede to the wishes of the masters by whom they were employed. It is evident that there are not less than a million men in this country who are ready and willing to take up arms against the present system of misrule, and in the cause of Reform; the time and means of co-operation is all they wait for. If we may believe the reports of the newspapers, it appears that some little disappointment in co-operation has defeated the present projected insurrection. Eye-witnesses have reported that the hearts and courage of the men are good, they only want confidential leaders, and the means of co-operation.—The dragoons who were encountered at Bonny-muir assert, that the men who opposed them were desperate, and did not in the proper manner wait the charge of the cavalry, but impetuously and indiscriminately rushed on them. Unless the present administration can devise the means of filling the bel-

lies of those men and their families, they will never subdue the spirit and inclination of those men for appealing to arms for the purpose of bettering their condition. The men are fully sensible of the cause of their distress, they do not now as heretofore, vent their anger on the farmers and millers, they wish to strike at the root of the evil that surrounds them at once, and there is not a question but that after the experience of a few attempts and defeats they will succeed. History cannot produce an instance where a feeling of opposition, such as exists in this country at this moment, was ever finally subdued by the government. Whilst the corruptions of a government are progressive, an opposition to it will also be progressive; and as the latter is certain of the strongest foundation, it must finally succeed and root out the former. But the great misfortune has been, that whenever a crisis of this kind has arrived, they have began again on the old system, and corruption might be said to have been reduced from old age to infancy only. The cause of the necessity of continual revolutions is, that governments when revolutionized have been established on a wrong basis. The United States of North America is the only government that at present has a good basis, and even in that there is much room for improvement. If France had adopted a representative system of government at the peace of Amiens, nothing could have subverted it, she would have revolutionized all Europe e'er this. It was the want of a representative system of government that reduced France to the ignominy of a Bourbon Reign in the present day. As experiments and experience are essential in all improvements, let us hope to benefit by them.

It is evident, that although there is a similar feeling throughout the northern counties of England, and the whole of Scotland, there is nothing like communication and co-operation. For the present, we find Lancashire and Cheshire quite still and silent, as if there was not a reformer there. A few months since, when those counties were in a state of agitation and supposed insurrection, Yorkshire and Scotland were quite still; and again, when even any thing like tumult or insurrection has been expected in London, the whole of the country has been found immoveable and silent, and anxious spectators. Thus our troops are driven about from pillar to post, and every where become unnecessary, as to actual engagement. There is not a question but that it is the dread of the first encounter with the military, that keeps the people in their present state of subordination. Our military are well fed and

well paid, and more caressed by their officers at the present moment, than ever they were before—they look on the half-starved mechanic as the Grecians did on their Helots, or as the American planter does on his negroes. They know that if they massacre them indiscriminately, they will find a reward, and the thanks of the government for it. They find that the faction in power are eager to widen the breach between themselves and the people; and as our army is composed of the most ignorant and the most dissolute of the community, they are easily trained to the purposes of the faction which composes the present government. There is another circumstance which has a tendency to keep the people and military in a state of variance, and that is, the provincial feeling which exists among the English, Irish, Scotch, and Welch. It is the practice of the government to apply the soldiers of one province to keep down the people of the other; and thus we might be fairly said to be under the subjection of foreign troops. There is no sympathy between the soldier and the people—the former know that they are hired and paid for no other purpose whatever than to keep the people in a state of subjection to the faction which composes the government.

Among those who have been lately drawn into the attempt to effect an insurrection, are to be found many lads not more than fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen years of age, which circumstance affords a strong expression of the general feeling in those districts. What must be the extent of the hatred of that system against which boys and women are ready to array themselves. It is much to be desired that the people should not be over rash, and place themselves open to the attack of the military. Effectual insurrections have generally been commenced in towns where an injured and indignant people may act with effect. I cannot imagine that the military of those kingdoms would be so ultimately blind, as to persist in an extermination of those who might array themselves against the faction in power. They could not disobey the order of an onset; but should ever the people make a formidable stand and be able to afford security to those who might join them, it then becomes doubtful whether there would be any real opposition to them. There are thousands in the middle and higher ranks of society, in this country, who would hail an effectual change in the system of government. Those who are ready to support it are they who are fostered by it, who have made large fortunes by it, and who have every branch of their family preying on the public. They fear that they shall be called on

to refund a part of their ill-gotten gain, and thus they become desperate. But this is a class of men who can give no real support to the system—they are soon unnerved and ready to fly when there is the least appearance of danger. Every day appears to be big with events—the times are portentous, not only in Great Britain, but throughout Europe. France appears to be waiting the death of Louis, as the lessons he has received, have rendered the old man very courteous, and apparently, affectionate to that nation.

Ireland appears to possess a spirit without understanding the right point to apply it. The late feeling, which has been ridiculously named Ribandism, appears to have gone on without any object and almost without design. I have often felt astonished at seeing individuals even fond of, and partial to nicknames, such as Ribandmen in Ireland and Radicals in Great Britain. I am certain that the adoption and support of such terms have a tendency to bring a good cause into disrepute, and to prevent more discreet men from joining it. The name of Radical sprung up last year, and I feel astonished to see men embrace it, and adopt it as an anonymous signature to their communications. A good title to a society of men as well as to a book is some assistance to it. The word Reformer stripped of its concomitants is all very well, but when we find the words Moderate, Thorough, and Radical, applied to it, it becomes like a dead and useless weight on it, and creates opinions that would not have existed, if those words had been kept out of sight and hearing. The title of Whig and Tory have existed so long in this country, that the principles on which they were founded, have more than once changed sides, whilst the title has been adhered to. The title of a party is no proof of its principle whatever, we must look to its conduct. None but weak and delusive characters will array themselves under a title and faction, such as have no power nor intention to act independently. It has been the plan of the government of this country to divide the people by title, and thus continually to keep up divisions among them, until the main point, a reformation of abuse, has been lost sight of, and such feelings as might have been well applied have been lost in party feeling. In the present state of affairs it is high time that we should drop all party distinctions, and clamour about something real. Every Reformer will say that he wishes to see the government established upon a system of fair and equal representation, then let him not look to see whether any person has a more extensive view than himself, but apply himself assiduously

duously to accomplish that which he himself has in view. By such conduct we shall be all found to be acting unanimously, without any apparent design and concert, and instead of wasting our time in jeering each other with idle and useless names, we shall be found forwarding the grand and all important cause. The time is come for action, and idle dispute must be laid aside, all bickering and private feeling must be lost sight of in pursuing the general good. The more extensive our means the less will be our loss and the more speedy the accomplishment of our object.

Dorchester Gaol, April 19th, 1820.

R. CARLILE.

TRIAL OF SIR CHARLES WOLSELEY AND MR. HARRISON.

Corruption sweeps all before her like the raging pestilence. The trial of the above gentlemen came on at Chester last week, and a verdict of guilty, was given against both. I am not at all surprized at this, when I recollect and reflect, that juries were always to be found adapted to the purposes which James the Second and his chief justice Jefferies had for them. Algernon Sidney was found guilty of high treason by a jury, and I have not the least doubt if Sir Charles Wolseley's attendance at the Stockport meeting had been charged on him as an act of high treason, but that the same jury would have given a verdict of guilty. In the present state of public feeling, both law and justice must be considered as suspended, neither the one nor the other will be seen again until a reform be accomplished. A prosecution on the part of the existing government is the greatest honour that can fall on any individual. Affairs are rapidly approaching a crisis where they will not be long stationary. At no given period in its history, has this country presented a similar spectacle to what it does at present. Every moment appears to be pregnant with events that carry with them the greatest consequences. Let those who are about to be imprisoned be of good cheer, its continuance cannot be long. Temperance is the best companion to take to a prison, where the exercise is restrained. If I find no further foul play than I have already found, I have no fear but that my imprisonment will add a new lease to my life. At no period of my life can I recollect, that I was so free from aches and pains, although my confinement is, on the part of

my keepers, studiously made solitary, I am thoroughly comfortable both in mind and body. I cannot say, but that the occasional visit of a friend would be an agreeable change, but I do not allow the absence of one to make me uneasy. My diet is almost wholly confined to bread and milk, and water. I make a dinner from vegetables, when I can manage to get any such as turnips and greens. I am not one of those, who are decidedly hostile to the use of animal food, but I would rather leave it than have to cook and clean after it, which I must do if I am inclined to have it here. I am not one of those who make a vow to confine myself to any thing, but I seek that which is the most convenient, and the same time the most essential to health. If those few observations could tend to lighten the meditated imprisonment of those who are about to receive it, I shall be glad. I regret that any individual should be exposed to an imprisonment in consequence of selling any thing that I have written or published, I would willingly and with a great deal of pleasure have faced any prosecution of the kind myself, but this would not have answered the purposes of our common prosecutors. I hope, that, those individuals who are about to receive imprisonment for selling the Republican, will be by no means daunted, they must consider themselves as among the general objects of persecution in the cause of reform, or revolution, which you like. A little host of Jefferies' will be required now to go into the manufacturing districts, and hang the starving rebels. It appears they are not at a loss for a general Kirk and his lambs. The boroughmongers should begin to build new prisons instead of new churches, for of those that are already standing, they find the former filled, and the latter deserted. If our mad-brained rulers think to conquer the existing spirit, and demand for reform by the bayonet, they will find themselves mistaken. Every attempt at insurrection will become more and more formidable, until at last it will become effectual. They may hang and transport a few hundreds or thousands, but the spirit will increase, and the more the people are inured to the shedding of blood, the less will be their scruples to retaliate. It is astonishing to see, how the lessons and experience of history are lost on king's and rulers: they proceed with a blind infatuation, as if they were omnipotent, and are not to be awakened to danger, until they feel themselves in the vortex of destruction. Power has most certainly a tendency to blind and corrupt the mind, where it is not the offspring of knowledge.

I hope that the victims who are now about to be offered up

at the shrine of despotism, will act like men. To a mind impressed with the blessings of liberty, life is not worth preserving in the absence or in the deprivation of the means of obtaining it. From an imprisonment, which might be considered a temporary death, we have the hope of a joyful resurrection. Look to Spain—look to that country, which but a few months since, was considered as sunk irrecoverably in the depths of darkness and despotism. The victims of the inquisition were brought forth from their dungeons, no doubt trembling and imagining the knife and the faggot were ready for them; but no, it was to a joyful resurrection. They could scarce endure the resplendent blaze of light around them, and fancied that it must have been a vision. Look to the abject Ferdinand, who now trembles before the authority of those whom he lately banished and imprisoned. I find this sufficient to make me happy. I live in the hope of a similar joyful resurrection.

Dorchester Gaol, April 17th 1820.

R. CARLILE.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

In our last number it was stated, in a letter written by Mr. Carlile, to an anonymous correspondent, that he might have a copy of the *Age of Reason*, and *Palmer's Principles of Nature*, by leaving a £1 note for them; we are however compelled to state, that Mr. C. laboured under a mistake, for the copies of those works, which were set apart for preservation, were not removed, in consequence of the very sudden and unexpected seizure made by the harpies of the law, immediately after sentence was past, and that no copies of those works can be had at any price.

The price of the publication of the *Life of David* last week, should have been 2s. instead of 1s. 6d.

We have to acknowledge the receipt of the *Freethinkers Creed*, but do not think it worth insertion. We are aware that there is a continual jarring between the two sects who call themselves *Free-thinking Christians*, and *Unitarian Christians*, between whom a third sect can scarcely perceive a shade of difference as to their abstract professions of belief, but as we look upon every man who assumes to himself the title of *Christian*, whatever be its appendage, as led along by the customs and prejudice of the age, we cannot descend over to a notice of their creeds. We feel assured that the same species of *Priestcraft* predominates in every sect, and that there is as much *Priestcraft* to be found in the chapel of *Jewin Street Crescent*, and (I believe) the *Gravel Pits of Hoxton*, as at *St. Peter's at Rome*. The system is the same, they are divided by names only. In the

general wreck of superstition, they will be lost sight of, and therefore they are not individually worth notice. We hope to see the day, when even the "Age of Reason" shall be laid on the shelf as lumber from the superstitious notions it inculcates.

Although for the present we are of opinion, that a more useful book cannot be circulated. It is well calculated to produce the first impressions, or in other words, for infants and children in the school of reason. We thank our correspondent for the trouble he has given himself in forwarding this creed, and we hope, that he had not formed an expectation of any further comment upon it. It must go on the file with the Athanasian Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Apostles Creed.

We feel it an imperative duty in closing the second volume of the Republican, to make an apology for the innumerable errors that have appeared in it. Whole sentences have gone forth to the Public very differently to what they were written, which the accustomed reader of the Republican might have easily perceived. The Editor trusts that his present situation, will be a sufficient apology for such (to him) painful occurrences. In several instances, when speaking of this county, the word country has been substituted for it. An error which the reader might not readily perceive. To give a list of the *errata*, would fill a sheet; a task too painful in the operation, and appearance when finished. We trust that a candid allowance will be made in this instance, by that public to whose approbation and support we have studied to aspire, and we trust not in vain.

EDITOR.

CONTINUATION OF REPLY TO THE REV. THOMAS HARTWELL
HORNE'S PAMPHLET, ENTITLED DEISM REFUTED, &c.

From Page 443

I now proceed with the seventh chapter, which details a narrative of which I cannot admit the credibility, although Mr. Horne has said, there is nothing in the bible incredible: "*And the Lord said unto Noah, come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation. Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and the female: and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female. Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of the earth. And Noah did according unto all that the Lord commanded him. And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters*

was upon the earth." In the last chapter we were informed, that the Lord ordered Noah to take two only of every living creature, male and female, in the present we find the number of clean beasts and fowls augmented to seven couple. I also find by another account in the following chapter, that the whole extent of the time that Noah and his fellow animals were in the ark exceeded a year. With respect to clean and unclean beasts, I presume, according to the Mosaic law, that previous to its formation and adoption, nothing of the kind was known. Priests themselves have endeavoured to shew, as an excuse for the use of animal food, that human nature endured a change at this deluge, which rendered animal food essential to its existence. The contrary of this is known at present. We can only consider the present notice of clean and unclean beasts as a blunder of the compiler. "*And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood. Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the earth, There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah. And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth.*" In this paragraph we find the former again contradicted: here the number is again reduced to one pair of beasts, clean and unclean, and fowls also: Such bungling work would not do for any thing but a sacred book. "*In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights. In the self same day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japeth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark; they, and every beast after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and every fowl after his kind, every bird of every sort. And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life. And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and the Lord shut him in. And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth. And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark*

went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail, and the mountains were covered. And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowls, and of cattle, and of beast; and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land died. And every living substance was destroyed, which was upon the face of the ground, both man and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark. And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days." I have very little to offer here by way of comment, I shall proceed to extract the remainder of the account of the deluge, after cautioning the reader to observe, that in this last paragraph the number is stated to be one couple only of all animals preserved, save the human species. In the sixth chapter, it is stated to be one couple; in the beginning of the seventh, it is stated to be seven couple of clean animals and fowls; and, again, it is twice repeated in the subsequent part of the seventh chapter, that it was one couple only. Perhaps Mr. Horne can reconcile this: I call it a contradiction. I now take from the first to the nineteenth verse of the eighth chapter. "And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged. The fountains also of the deep, and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained; and the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated. And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat. And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month: in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen. And it came to pass, at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the windows of the ark which he had made: and he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth. Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground; but the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark, for the

"waters were on the face of the whole earth: then he put
 "forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him in
 "the ark. And he stayed yet other seven days; and again
 "he sent forth the dove out of the ark; and the dove came
 "into him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was olive
 "leaf pluckt off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated
 "from off the earth. And he stayed yet other seven days;
 "and sent forth the dove; which returned not again to him
 "any more. And it came to pass in the six hundredth and
 "first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the
 "waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah re-
 "moved the covering off the ark, and looked, and behold, the
 "face of the ground was dry. And in the second month, on
 "the seven-and-twentieth day of the month, was the earth
 "dried. And God spake unto Noah, saying, Go forth of the
 "ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives
 "with thee. Bring forth with thee every living thing that is
 "with thee, of all flesh, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of
 "every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they
 "may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and mul-
 "tiply upon the earth. And Noah went forth, and his sons,
 "and his wife, and his sons' wives with him: every beast,
 "every creeping thing, and every fowl, and whatsoever
 "creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of
 "the ark." Thus ended the deluge!!!

I shall commence my observations with the dates given us
 in the seventh and eighth chapter, as to the length of time the
 waters were on the earth. In the twelfth verse of the seventh
 chapter, we have it thus:—"And the ruin was upon the
 earth forty days and forty nights." In the seventeenth
 verse of the same chapter, we find it thus: "And the flood
 was forty days upon the earth." In the twenty-fourth verse
 of the same chapter, we find it thus: "And the waters pre-
 vailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days." In the
 third verse of the eighth chapter, we are told: "And the
 waters returned from off the earth continually; and after
 the end of the hundred and fifty days, the waters were
 abated." In the fourth verse, we find that "the ark rested
 in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month,
 upon the mountains of Ararat." In the fifth verse we are
 told again, that "the waters decreased continually until
 the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the
 month, were the tops of the mountains seen." We are again
 told, forty days after the tops of the mountains were seen, that

Noah sent forth a dove, and she could find no place to rest the sole of her foot; still, seven days later, we find the same dove sent forth, who returned in the evening with an olive branch in her mouth. In seven other days, the dove was again sent forth, which returned no more. I should like to know how Noah provided a mate for the dove that was left. It requires a priest to reconcile the above dates: I feel that I am not equal to it. I shall take in the last three verses of the eighth chapter, and then commence some general observations on this account of a general deluge, and endeavour to shew, that its falsehood is much more probable than its truth. "And Noah
 "built an altar unto the Lord, and took of every clean
 "beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings
 "on the altar. And the Lord smelled a sweet savour: and
 "the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground
 "any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart
 "is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more
 "every thing living, as I have done. While the earth re-
 "maineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and
 "summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." Although it hath been once asserted, that seven couple of clean beasts and fowls were preserved, yet we have three assertions to this one, that there were but one couple, one male and one female: then, I would ask, how could Noah sacrifice one of these, and still preserve the breed? The Jewish Deity is here again placed in the most ridiculous point of view; because his olfactory nerves were excited by the burning of a few animals, he promised not to curse the ground any more in consequence of whatever man might be guilty of, neither would he again smite every living thing. He creates, and repents that he had created: he destroys, and repents that he had destroyed. The last verse of the eighth chapter, is the only truism that we have yet met with, and, as after a few reflections on this wonderful deluge, we shall commence a new era, I hope we shall find it more consistent with truth.

Various and inconsistent as the writers and commentators on the general deluge have been, not one of them has left us sufficient evidence, that should require from us an implicit faith in its having transpired, save that we are called on to believe it, because it is found in what is falsely termed Holy Writ, or the Word of God. Many nations have preserved a chronological account of what has transpired amongst them, from a time far antecedent to the supposed deluge; amongst those are the Chinese, whose veracity on points of this nature

cannot be called in question; and they deny its having taken place, at least, that the empire of China was not subject to it. It was a general received opinion, in those times, that the earth was shaped like a square trencher, as the corners and ends of the earth are frequently spoken of, and expressions of this nature are frequently put into the mouth of the the Jewish Deity.

Philosophers who have been weak enough to attempt to account for this general deluge, have asserted two probabilities, one, that the waters which are on the surface and in the cavities of the earth might be expanded by a proportionate degree of heat, so as to cover the highest points of the earth or mountains, the other, that the near approach of a comet to the earth, would effect a general deluge every twenty-four hours, by drawing the water from its bed over that part of the earth which became parallel with it. To the first I would answer, that the heat sufficient to expand the water, would have destroyed Noah, with his pitch-cemented ark, and the whole host of animals. Mariners will say, that under a tropic sun, they are under the constant necessity of pumping water on every part of their ship to keep it together, the slightest of which, are cemented with something more durable than pitch. To the second account I would say, that it is more probable, because we know that the moon, when in a certain position with the earth, has the power of raising a considerable tide. But even the near approach of a comet would produce but a partial deluge, although it might be sufficient to destroy almost every ærial and terrestrial animal. But even this is giving conjecture and probability its greatest latitude, and still we cannot come any where near to the Bible account of the deluge. I believe that the origin of this tale must have proceeded from some partial inundation, such as that of the Nile in Egypt, which occurs annually more or less, or similar to that which has lately occurred in Holland by the breaking of the dykes, and that it hath been dressed up in the *marvellous* by the Jewish Priests to answer their purposes and craft. I am inclined to admit that great convulsions of nature have occasionally taken place, which have destroyed immense numbers of animals both human and inhuman. I look on this and every other natural globe of matter to be A GREAT CHEMICAL APPARATUS, constantly composing and decomposing various substances, and, like the human body, subject to eruptions, explosions, and ebullitions, in consequence of the overflowing or confined inflammable matter which is created in it. Hence

earthquakes and all the devastations we behold in nature. There is nothing in science or in the mechanics, the origin of which cannot be traced to nature: therefore when we talk of assisting nature, we talk of that which we do not understand. The progress of science will make us acquainted with the laws of nature: the study of nature will make us scientific.

Ovid, (who is called an heathen or profane writer) in his metamorphosis, has also attempted to describe the deluge; from which it does evidently appear that a tradition of this description was current among the inhabitants of Europe and Asia. Ovid has given us his account how the earth became peopled immediately after the flood; he represents Deucalion and Pyrrha (who were the only persons preserved) as applying to the oracle to know how they should again people the earth (for it appears the oracles were not drowned with the other living things) the answer they received from the oracle was, that they should take the bones of their mother, and throw them behind them; this direction puzzled them, since their mother had disappeared in the general wreck; at length they resolve, that the earth must be meant as their mother, and the stones as her bones, which they continue to throw backward until they have sufficiently peopled the earth; but Ovid had a little more candour than the writer of the Pentateuch, for in the conclusion of his Metamorphosis he admits his work to be a fiction.

Why the writer or compiler of the Pentateuch found it necessary to introduce an account of a deluge, I am at a loss to conceive, unless such a report or tradition to have been current at that time, which would have made it necessary, that his writings might obtain a better reception and more general belief. It has been observed by some writers, that the waters were boiling hot, save just round where the ark floated, for the purpose of destroying the fishes. If this were true, Noah must have had a fine kettle of fish ready cooked for him, and by this means we might account for his having a twelve-months stock of provisions. This also corresponds with one of the probabilities I have offered, that the waters were expanded by heat. By another, that Og, the king of Bashan, who was a giant, obtained permission to ride across the ark, on condition that he would not injure Noah nor his family afterwards; and that Noah put him out food through the top of the ark—water I presume he had a plenty!!!

It is almost impossible to be serious in commenting on this horrible and destructive account of the deluge, without giving

it a simple contradiction and denial. The compiler of this account tells us again, that the windows of heaven were opened for the purpose of showering down water; and, again, when water enough had been let down, the windows of heaven were stopped: with hasps and hinges I presume. They must have been made to fit well to prevent a continual leaking, or the crevices filled with old rags. STILL THIS IS BELIEVED!!!

I now proceed with the ninth chapter: "And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth. And the fear of you and the dread of you, shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered." This is a false assertion, and no where verified: there are few animals more slavish and timid than man. Man certainly raises himself superior to them by living in society, and by artful practices, which his reason has provided for his safety. How few are the men in England that would find resolution to hunt the boar and the tiger, or attack the shark in the water! I doubt whether there is any animal who has more general dread about him than man, in the aggregate. "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you, even as the green herb I have given you all things." Here the Jew and the Christian finds an authority for the use of animal food; but who is he that hath ventured, in opposition to this general instruction, to designate certain animals as clean and unclean? This is a mere whim:—certainly, there is some little difference in the flesh of animals, but there are many which are designated unclean, that are much better flavoured than those which are called clean. Those who have indulged their appetites with human flesh, have preferred it to all other. The Jews and the Mahometans profess to abhor pork. This arises from superstition and a religious education. The English Christians consume more pork than any other meat. The Frenchman will eat frogs, rats, and cats; all of which the Englishman abhors, as much as the Jew or Mahometan abhors pork. Therefore, what is considered clean and unclean in one nation, is reversed in the other; whilst he who is content with vegetable food, considers every animal as unclean and unfit for food.

The inhabitants of Siam again go further, and refuse to destroy for food any living thing, either vegetable or animal; they pluck nothing but the ripe fruit, and then carefully preserve the seed it contains: this also is prejudice. Some prejudices

become useful in society, others again are extremely injurious. The philosophy of Epicurus, as applied to man in society, appears to me to be more rational than any other system laid down, that is, to make pleasure the business, and to avoid pain, the study of life. Priests have endeavoured to revile this system of philosophy, by holding up Epicurus as the emblem of gluttony and vice; but in this, as in many other things, they have shifted a character which applies well to themselves, on a man, who, of all men, was least deserving of it. Epicurus was an abstemious man in point of food, and was content with bread and water, finding it more conducive to the health and pleasure of both body and mind, than a greater variety of grosser food. Epicurus taught that the smallest quantity of food, that was sufficient to preserve the health of the body, was to be preferred, for the common use of man, on the ground, that health is the source of pleasure.

The philosophy of Epicurus made a considerable progress in Greece; but being of so pure a nature, and having virtue for its basis, it was subject to the reproach and ridicule of other interested sects, who have succeeded in making the Epicurean philosophy to be an emblem of that which it was the chief study of Epicurus to avoid. It is the interest of man to keep himself free from prejudices. Prejudice discolours every thing that is valuable and conducive to the welfare of man. Paine has beautifully described it as the spider of the mind, in whose web the most pleasing objects are entangled, and poisoned. The man, who makes a vow to use no more animal food, from an imagined delicacy or idea of humanity and fellow-feeling, is guided by prejudice, because even water and vegetables are pregnant with animal life. Health should be the chief study of man, pleasure is sure to follow it, and pain will be in a great measure avoided.

But to proceed with the book of books, it says:—"But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat." The Jews, to carry this instruction into effect, mangle and beat their animal food to render it as dry as possible. The Christian world, in general, make the belly the first object of worship, and all other deities subordinate to it. "And surely your blood of your lives will I require, at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man." Those two verses contain a strange something, or nothing,

which I can scarce comprehend. The Jewish God says, he will require the blood of man at the hand of beasts. I must call upon some priest to explain, what punishment a tyger receives who destroys a man, whether he is punished in this life, or that which they tell us is to come. The latter sentence is an assertion negatived every hour in the day. "And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein." This injunction is frequently found in the Bible; but still, some of our modern reverends disclaim it, and cry out that the increase should be checked by every possible means. Malthus has recommended that children who are born without the means of support, should be left to perish! We have just had a woman committed to this gaol, for twelve months' imprisonment, for no other crime than being fruitful. She has borne four children, and the man whom she claimed as the father of the last child, offered to marry her, but the magistrates have interfered, and will not allow it. So the poor woman, perhaps, from making the holy Scriptures her guide, has got herself into a pretty scrape. The system of Malthus is quite a favourite among the higher class of animals, who do not wish to see any greater number of the poorer classes procreated, than are necessary for to become their beasts of burden.

"And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, and I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; and with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of the flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, this is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations; I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud. And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, this is the

“token of the covenant, which I have established between me
“and all flesh that is upon the earth.” Here is again a fine
specimen of Priestcraft. This is something like Christopher
Columbus who frightened the American Indians into an ac-
quiescence with his measures, by announcing to them an ap-
proaching eclipse, which would destroy them if they dis-
obeyed him. This tale of the rainbow, being a cove-
nant between God and man, that he will no more de-
stroy the earth, is calculated to excite belief in the ignorant
and unwary mind, more than any other circumstance related
in the Bible; but that great professor of Christianity, Sir Isaac
Newton, should not have taught us the cause of this bow, if he
had been anxious for the preservation of superstition. We now
know, that a rainbow is a natural cause, that it is the refra-
ction of the sun’s rays on a cloud of rain or a falling shower.
Artificial bows might be created: they are visible in the most
brilliant and delightful manner, at certain cascades, when the
sun is in the proper direction. There are other causes than
rain for producing these bows in miniature by the refraction
of the sun’s rays. I have seen the wall of the kitchen belong-
to the house which I inhabited in the north side of Fleet-street
beautifully decorated, every morning when the sun shone out,
with a small bow and the most refulgent colours. I presume
the priest would now hesitate to say, before any body of men,
that the rainbow was occasionally placed in the clouds to re-
mind man of this pretended covenant. Thus we find that each
succeeding discovery in science, tends still further to dispel the
gloom of superstition and priestcraft. The bubbles which the
child blows into the air from soap and water will convince any
one of the natural cause of a rainbow.

“And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the Ark, were
“Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham is the father of
“Canaan. These are the three sons of Noah: and of them
“was the whole earth overspread. And Noah began to be an
“husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: and he drank of
“the wine and was drunken; and he was uncovered within
“his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the naked-
“ness of his father, and told his two brethren without. And
“Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both
“their shoulders, and went backward and covered the naked-
“ness of their father; and their faces were backward, and
“they saw not their father’s nakedness. And Noah awoke
“from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done to
“him. And he said, cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants

“shall he be unto his brethren. And he said, blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years: and he died.” There is much in this paragraph that displays the cloven foot of the Jewish priest. In the first place we are taught, that the most righteous man upon earth might get drunk if he chooses without committing an offence against good morals, but, that, because one of his sons was so unfortunate as to see his father laying in a state of drunkenness and nudity, all his offspring are subjected to the curse of slavery. This is visiting the sins of the father upon the children to the third and fourth generations with a vengeance. Who can discover any thing improper in the conduct of Ham? What if he had seen the nakedness of his father? There are thousands of poor children in the present day in this country, who witness their father’s nakedness for want of clothes to cover it. Was Ham to be responsible for his righteous father’s drunkenness? A pretty drunken fellow must Noah have been to have cursed or have blessed either. Besides, I cannot see how Ham is called the younger son of Noah, as he has always taken the precedence of Japheth in the mention of their names. The drift of all this blessing and cursing is this, that this tale was written after the Jews had exterminated the Caananites, and is told as a prophecy, by way of an apology for it. Such is the origin of all the supposed prophecies in the Old Testament. I have gone through the ninth chapter, and must now take my leave of the drunken and righteous Noah. In the tenth chapter there is scarce any thing worthy of notice, save the allusions to Nimrod and the isles of the Gentiles. The chapter gives us a genealogy of the descendants from Noah, until it is supposed there are sufficient to people the whole earth. In the fifth verse we find the following assertion. “By these (meaning certain descendants of Noah) were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations.” This is one proof, that this book of Genesis was written in a time far subsequent to the supposed time of Moses. The epithet of Gentiles was not known until the Jews were in the plenitude of their power at Jerusalem, it was then applied to all other nations who were supposed to be Heathen or Pagans, or to worship a different God or Gods from the Jews. I am

doubtful whether the above epithet was known before the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, and after the building of the second temple, we shall find it a term wrested from the Jews by the Christians, and applied to all those who reject, or are ignorant of, their superstitions. The book of Genesis is called the book of Moses, and both Jew and Christian will persist in it, that it was all written by Moses, and on no other authority, than because, in what they call the sacred writings, it precedes the book of Exodus. There is no other ground whatever for the assertion, but many proofs of the contrary, which I shall notice as I proceed.

The observation respecting Nimrod is in the eighth and ninth verse as follows: "And Cush begat Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; wherefore it is said, even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord." We are here again led into a proof of my assertion on Noah's curse of Canaan. Ham is in this chapter represented as having four sons, of whom Canaan is the youngest. Nimrod is also the grandson of Ham, and according to Bible History and Chronology we are told, that he was the first to establish a kingdom or empire, which was nothing less than the great Assyrian empire. But why should Noah's curse be confined or intended for one only of the children of Ham, unless for the purpose I have stated. The priests have also endeavoured to pervert the sense of my last quotation respecting Nimrod, and have asserted, that his being a mighty hunter before the Lord, means, that he was a great sinner, but what proof have we in the Bible that Nimrod was a sinner, or did not that which was right? None, that I can perceive. He is represented as a great hunter; and we now find in all uncivilized societies, that their common occupation is hunting and fishing, when they are near the sea coast.—From hunters they become more bold, form stronger societies, and become robbers, from robbers they become kings. The Bible account of Nimrod becoming a mighty hunter, and lastly founding a kingdom, appears to me to be consistent, if not with truth, it is with history. All our Kings, who can trace their families back twelve or fourteen centuries, will find, that their ancestors were the chiefs of bands of hunters and of robbers, which became sufficiently formidable to enable them to make inroads on the Roman Provinces. Such has been the origin of all existing monarchical governments. The remainder of the tenth chapter furnishes nothing more for observation.

(To be continued.)

TRIAL OF BRUCE AND M'INNIS AT CHESTER.

The trial of the above persons came on at Chester, about a fortnight since, on a charge of shooting at Birch, the Stockport constable, when a verdict of guilty was given against both. Mr. Justice Marshall, who, at the opening of the assize, expressed his approbation to the Grand Jury, of the late Manchester massacre, presided at the trial. A witness on the part of the crown was brought forward of the name of Pearson, who had been confined on the same charge. Although the fate of the men rested entirely on this witness, he was guilty of the grossest prevarication, and when Mr. Jones, who was the counsel for the prisoners, asked him what religion he professed, both the Judge and Mr. Cross, of Derby notoriety, objected to the question as improper. Mr. Jones persisted, and on Pearson saying that he believed in a God, Mr. Cross jumped up, and said that was quite sufficient. The Judge sanctioned Mr. Cross in his observation. It appears that Pearson was not a professor of Christianity, and if he had been brought forward under any other circumstances, than as evidence on the part of the crown in this prosecution, he would have been rejected with a reprimand. The late Lord Ellenborough rejected the evidence of a man on a very trifling question, because he was an infidel to the Christian religion; and here, forsooth, because the crown prosecutes, the lives of two men are sacrificed to such an evidence, connected with other very suspicious circumstances. The charge against Bruce was, that he decoyed Birch into a conversation, whilst M'Innis shot him, but the evidence totally failed to prove it, and Birch himself said, that he did not know but that he might first have hailed Bruce to ask him a question: still a Cheshire jury are ready to deprive a man of life on such evidence as this! M'Innis confessed that it was he who shot Birch, but that Bruce was in no wise privy to it; and immediately on the verdict being given, he reprimanded both judge and jury by this confession.

EDITOR.

Since the conviction and sentence of M'Innis, we have been favoured with an account of the appearance of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost to him; not, as it appears, at the request of M'Innis, but of some friend who has interceded for him, and without any apparent repentance on the part of M'Innis, he has been assured that there is a world of happiness and eternity for him, and that he is entitled to the bliss which is enjoyed by the faithful in the mansions of heaven. This conversion is of equal importance and very similar to that of Paul, and we should not be surprized if M'Innis be canonized as a saint, we know that there are many worse characters on the calendar. M'Innis is a man held up by the Priests as skilled in theology and metaphysics, and as a specimen of it, they have published a letter, which he has written, or they have written for him, which appears to have been purposely mis-spelt, and made nonsense of. The cloven foot of the priest is so visible here, that it

scarcely requires notice for detection. They seize the moment when a man knows that death will reach him in a few hours, and work upon the agitation of his mind. M'Innis has been called an Atheist, and we are told that he did not discover his error, until he returned to his cell, after sentence had been passed upon him, when it was suddenly revealed to him, by the prayer of some stranger who prayed in his cell, and after M'Innis is dead, he intends to send us the memoirs of his life, and his reasons for becoming a Christian. The brave and unfortunate Cashman died more like a man.

EDITOR

SUBSCRIPTIONS.

To Mr. Carile, the sum of Twenty Shillings, from one who thinks that if the Bible is really and truly the Word of God, an Apology for it is one of the most monstrous blasphemies that ever issued from the press.—An Apology for the works of the Almighty, from the hands of man!—Why man might with as much reason make an Apology for the solar system, as for the Bible, if it is truly the work of God. I had never read the Bible, except as all poor children do that are taught to read by it, till I accidentally saw the book of the late Bishop of Llandaff, this it was which set me to examine the Bible, and the more I examined the more I became an Infidel to it.—My good Sir, I have no more to say, than that the poor trifle inclosed should have been as many pounds as it is shillings, had my means allowed it.

Fifth Payment of the Weekly Pence of a few Friends to

Civil and Religious Liberty, P. Christie, Collector

Ditto, ditto, per R. Stevens

S. N., a Friend to Reform and an Enemy to Persecution

M. J., a Friend to Reform and an Enemy to Persecution

An Enemy to Persecution

John Williams

J. C. monthly

W. J.

An Enemy to Religious Persecution

THE PROGRESS OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION,

(Continued from page 463.)

These melancholy scenes might be enlivened by a crowd of visions and miracles, destined either to delay death, or celebrate the triumph, or to discover the relics, of those canonized saints who suffered for the name of Christ. But I cannot determine what I ought to transcribe, till I am satisfied how much I ought to believe. The gravest of the ecclesiastical historians, Eusebius himself, indirectly confesses, that he has related whatever might redound to the glory, and that he has suppressed all that could tend to the disgrace of religion.* Such an acknowledgment will naturally excite a suspicion, that a writer who has so openly violated one of the fundamental laws of history has not paid a very strict regard to the observance of the other; and the suspicion will derive additional credit from the character of Eusebius, which was less tinged with credulity, and more practised in the arts of courts, than that of almost any of his contemporaries. On some particular occasions, when the magistrates were exasperated by some personal motives of interest or resentment, when the zeal of the martyrs urged them to forget the rules of prudence and perhaps of decency, to overturn the altars, to pour out imprecations against the emperors, or to strike the judge as he sat on his tribunal, it may be presumed that every mode of torture which cruelty could invent, or constancy could endure, was exhausted on those devoted victims. Two circumstances, however, have been unwarily mentioned, which insinuate that the general treatment of the Christians, who had been apprehended by the officers of justice, was less intolerable than it is usually imagined to have been. 1. The confessors, who were condemned to work in the mines, were permitted, by the humanity or the negligence of their keepers, to build chapels, and freely to profess their religion in the midst of those dreary habitations†. 2. The bishops were obliged to check and to

* Such is the fair deduction from two remarkable passages in Eusebius l. viii. c. 2, and de Martyr, Palestin. c. 12. The prudence of the historian has exposed his own character to censure and suspicion. It is well known that he himself had been thrown into prison; and it was suggested that he had purchased his deliverance by some dishonourable compliance. The reproach was urged in his lifetime, and even in his presence, at the council of Tyre. See Tillemont, Memoires Ecclesiastiques, tom. v, part i, p. 67.

† Euseb. de Martyr. Palestin. c. 13.

censure the forward zeal of the Christians, who voluntarily threw themselves into the hands of the magistrates. Some of these were persons oppressed by poverty and debts, who blindly sought to terminate a miserable existence by a glorious death. Others were allured by the hope, that a short confinement would expiate the sins of a whole life; and others again were actuated by the less honourable motive of deriving a plentiful subsistence, and perhaps a considerable profit, from the alms which the charity of the faithful bestowed on the prisoners*. After the church had triumphed over all her enemies, the interest as well as vanity of the captives prompted them to magnify the merit of their respective suffering. A convenient distance of time or place gave an ample scope to the progress of fiction; and the frequent instances which might be alleged of holy martyrs, whose wounds had been instantly healed, whose strength had been renewed, and whose lost members had miraculously been restored, were extremely convenient for the purpose of removing every difficulty, and of silencing every objection. The most extravagant legends, as they conducted to the honour of the church, were applauded by the credulous multitude, countenanced by the power of the clergy, and attested by the suspicious evidence of ecclesiastical history.

The vague descriptions of exile and imprisonment, of pain and torture, are so easily exaggerated or softened by the pencil of an artful orator, that we are naturally induced to inquire into a fact of a more distinct and stubborn kind; the number of persons who suffered death in consequence of the edicts published by Diocletian, his associates, and his successors. The recent legendaries record whole armies and cities, which were at once swept away by the undistinguishing rage of persecution. The more ancient writers content themselves with pouring out a liberal effusion of loose and tragical invectives, without condescending to ascertain the precise number of those persons who were permitted to seal with their blood their belief of the gospel. From the history of Eusebius, it may however be collected, that only nine bishops were punished with death; and we are assured, by his particular enumeration of the martyrs of

* Augustin. Collat. Carthagin. Dei, iii. c. 13. ap. Tillemont, *Memoires Ecclesiastiques*, tom. v. part i, p. 46. The controversy with the donatists has reflected some, though perhaps a partial, light on the history of the African church.

Palestine, that no more than ninety-two Christians were entitled to that honourable appellation. As we are unacquainted with the degree of episcopal zeal and courage which prevailed at that time, it is not in our power to draw any useful inferences from the former of these facts; but the latter may serve to justify a very important and probable conclusion. According to the distribution of Roman provinces, Palestine may be considered as the sixteenth part of the eastern empire; and since there were some governors, who from a real or affected clemency had preserved their hands unstained with the blood of the faithful,† it is reasonable to believe, that the country which had given birth to christianity produced at least the sixteenth part of the martyrs who suffered death within the dominions of Galerius and Maximin; the whole might consequently amount to about fifteen hundred, a number which, if it is equally divided between the ten years of the persecution, will allow an annual consumption of one hundred and fifty martyrs. Allotting the same proportion to the provinces of Italy, Africa, and perhaps Spain, where, at the end of two or three years, the rigour of the penal laws was either suspended or abolished, the multitude of Christians in the Roman empire, on whom a capital punishment was inflicted by a judicial sentence, will be reduced to somewhat less than two thousand persons. Since it cannot be doubted that the Christians were more numerous, and their enemies more exasperated, in the time of Diocletian, than they had ever been in any former persecution, this probable and moderate computation may teach us to estimate the number of primitive saints and martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the important purpose of introducing Christianity into the world.

We shall conclude this chapter by a melancholy truth, which obtrudes itself on the reluctant mind; that even admitting, without hesitation or inquiry, all that history has recorded, or devotion has feigned, on the subject of martyrdoms, it must still be acknowledged, that the Christians, in the course of their intestine dissensions, have inflicted far greater severities on each other, than they had experienced from the zeal of infidels. During the ages of ignorance which

• When Palestine was divided into three, the prefecture of the East contained forty-eight provinces. As the ancient distinctions of nations were long since abolished, the Romans distributed the provinces according to a general proportion of their extent and opulence.

† *Ut gloriari possint nullum se innocentiam peremisse, nam et ipse audivi aliquos gloriantes, quia administratio sua, in hac parte, fuerit incruenta.* Lactant. Institut. Divin. v. 11.

followed the subversion of the Roman empire in the West, the bishops of the imperial city extended their dominion over the laity as well as clergy of the Latin church. The fabric of superstition which they had erected, and which might long have defied the feeble efforts of reason, was at length assaulted by a crowd of daring fanatics, who, from the twelfth to the sixteenth century, assumed the popular character of reformers. The church of Rome defended by violence, the empire which she had acquired by fraud; a system of peace and benevolence was soon disgraced by proscriptions, wars, massacres, and the institution of the holy office; and as the reformers were animated by the love of civil, as well as of religious freedom, the catholic princes connected their own interest with that of the clergy, and enforced by fire and the sword the terrors of spiritual censures. In the Netherlands alone, more than one hundred thousand of the subjects of Charles the Fifth are said to have suffered by the hand of the executioner; and this extraordinary number is attested by Grotius,* a man of genius and learning, who preserved his moderation amidst the fury of contending sects, and who composed the annals of his own age and country, at a time when the invention of printing had facilitated the means of intelligence, and increased the danger of detection. If we are obliged to submit our belief to the authority of Grotius, it must be allowed, that the number of protestants, who were executed in a single province and a single reign, far exceeded that of the primitive martyrs in the space of three centuries, and of the Roman empire. But if the improbability of the fact itself should prevail over the weight of evidence; if Grotius should be convicted of exaggerating the merit and sufferings of the reformers;† we shall be naturally led to enquire what confidence can be placed in the doubtful and imperfect monuments of ancient credulity; what degree of credit can be assigned to a courtly bishop, and a passionate declaimer, who, under the protection of Constantine, enjoyed the exclusive privilege of recording the persecutions inflicted on the Christians by the vanquished rivals, or disregarded predecessors of their gracious sovereign.

* Grot. Annal. de Rebus Belgicis, l. i, p. 12. Edit. fol.

† Fra-Paolo (Istoria del Concilio Tridentino, l. iii) reduces the number of Belgic martyrs to 50,000. In learning and moderation, Fra-Paolo was not inferior to Grotius. The priority of time gives some advantage to the evidence of the former, which he loses on the other hand by the distance of Venice from the Netherlands.

